

Emerson Bridge Opened In December

The Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge opened to traffic on December 13, 2003. Officials from Illinois and Missouri held a ceremony that morning to help the Emerson family dedicate the bridge. Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers, law enforcement and local officials who helped make it a success and to the thousands of people who braved the cold to watch, walk, run, bike and just be part of the bridge's history.



An In Depth Look: Stan Johnson, Area Engineer

As area engineer, Stan Johnson's work with the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge construction was very personal.

"It's been a very big part of my days for the last several years," Johnson says.

Even so, he says he won't be missing construction that much.

"It is a once in a lifetime project, but I'm glad it is finished," he says. "It's good to have it opened for the benefit of the traveling public."

Johnson said everything seems to be going just fine since traffic was switched to the Emerson Bridge on Dec. 13. And, the bridge's completion has come as a relief for more than just motorists.

"Our maintenance crews are happy to see traffic on the new bridge. They can now focus on other matters. Before, maintaining the old Mississippi River Bridge was

their first priority."

Johnson is proud and grateful to all his employees for their dedication and work during construction.

"The construction of this bridge affected everybody. Most of my employees worked on it at some point, and if they didn't, they pitched in to help out for those who did. I cannot thank them enough for their professionalism, their talent and all their hard work."

Even with the bridge construction complete, Johnson said there is no time to relax.

"Something else always comes to fill its place," he says.



Johnson driving a 1957 Mack B-85 fire engine across the bridge with his employees.

Lights Turned On In February

Aesthetic lighting will be the final touch to the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge, and one we should be enjoying by the time you read this article.

The Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce hosted a lighting ceremony to officially flip the switch on the lights on Feb. 21.

The Chamber and City of Cape Girardeau

applied for federal enhancement funds to pay for the lights.

Enhancement funds are monies the federal government requires the department to use to pay for a percentage of transportation improvements such as hiking/biking trails, museums and beautification. Local governments and organizations put forth

matching funds.

The Chamber sold each of the 140 lights on the bridge and *Eastern Access*

prints to help pay for its portion of the funds neces-

sary to add lighting to the Emerson Bridge.



Old Bridge Comes Down In Summer



Bids will be accepted this month to demolish Cape's old Mississippi River Bridge.

If awarded, work taking down the structure could begin this summer.

"The contractor would most likely start removing the deck and roadway approaches first," said Project Manager Eric Krapf.

Krapf says nothing will be going into the Mississippi River before August 1.

"Our Coast Guard permit cites U.S. Fish and Wildlife guidelines to follow," said Krapf. "The pallid sturgeon is an endangered fish believed to exist in the area of the bridge. We'll need to wait until after their spawning season before items go into the channel so not to disturb the fish."

Krapf says the demolition should be completed by the end of the year.

The Bridge *Beat* with Rep. Jo Ann Emerson



Massive cables and thousands of tons of new steel and concrete span the Mississippi River at Cape Girardeau. The awesome sight rises even above the old bridge - a symbol of Southern Missouri's future. The bridge would not look right without the Mississippi, nor would Cape Girardeau look right without our bridge. The river, the bridge,

and Cape Girardeau combine nature, industry, and community to create our Southern Missouri home.

The modern structure is both bold and graceful. Especially when compared to the 75-year-old bridge it replaces, the new bridge evokes the 21st century while seamlessly blending with the natural panorama around it.

The bridge is a reminder of how we live with the river, not just beside it.

Most of the time, the Mississippi River is a gentle companion to the communities that line it. Yet, in flood, it is violent, cruel, and irrepressible. A bridge to last us years into the future is necessary to continuing our way of life, travel, access to healthcare, and general transportation.

However, our new bridge over the Mississippi's conflicted waters is much more than infrastructure to us. It connects us to the great state of Illinois, and indeed to the rest of the world. While the water flows under the bridge, ideas, commerce, and people flow over it.

In Cape Girardeau, the new bridge is a sign of the new opportunities presented to our area. All over America, cities such as ours are revitalizing their downtown areas and investing in infrastructure. In few places, however, is the commitment to growth so strong and the scale of reinvestment so great. And the return on this reinvestment is visible.

For Southern Missouri, the new bridge is a sign that our demand for the goods of the world is growing as the world's demand for our goods grows as well. Our future is one of expanding trade and faster communication. Southern Missouri is closer to the rest of the world today than ever before.

But the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge resonates with our past, too: The labors of pioneers who crossed the Mis-

issippi and forded countless other rivers on their way to settle the American West. (In fact, below the bridge, Lewis and Clark passed by on the Mississippi River 200 years ago.) The arrival of industry to our nation, and the technological advancements in construction we have today because of steel and iron. The cultivation of thousands of varieties of produce and animal products we export to other parts of the nation and the world. The hard work and strong will of many Americans, together, focused on a single grand accomplishment rising above the river.

For me, and for many others, the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge is a reminder of my late husband and a testament to his service.

The bridge embodies his ideals - a drive to connect good ideas with the men and women who could make them work, a dedication to Southern Missouri's growth and prosperity.

Bill served Southern Missouri's Eighth Congressional District for over 15 productive years. During that time, he earned trust and admiration among the people of our communities, as well as in Congress. By his leadership, Bill became a servant of our district, our state, and our nation.

This bridge was a project he, along with area leaders, envisioned. Bill knew that, when it came to doling out federal projects, rural America was all too often last in line. Transportation infrastructure was the most egregious example of the disparity between urban and rural areas. A new bridge at Cape Girardeau was not a luxury, but an economic and public safety necessity.

Truthfully, in my seven years serving the same constituency, I have observed this challenge firsthand. I sympathize with the uphill battle Bill fought for Southern Missouri because I have inherited the same mandate from him. In many ways, it is getting easier, but in just as many ways, it is not.

The Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge, however, stands for me as a symbol of what we can accomplish together. It is a reminder that, with diligence and effort, we can ensure that rural America is not left out or left behind.

This bridge represents a strong handshake between two great states. It is a fitting tribute to Bill for his work on behalf of the people of the Heartland.

Emerson Bridge Fun Fact For Kids

The Annheuser Busch Clydesdales made an appearance at the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge dedication. These mighty animals weigh on average close to 2,000 pounds. The horseshoe for a full-grown Clydesdale measures more than 22 inches from end to end. Most of the aesthetic lights on the Emerson Bridge measure 16 inches by 18 inches--less than a Clydesdale's horseshoe--now that's a big foot!



Funds exit before road repairs begin



Missouri Department
of Transportation
Fiscal Year 2002

The Missouri Department of Transportation receives funding from a variety of sources. Motorists support their transportation system through motor-fuel taxes, vehicle license fees and motor-vehicle sales/use taxes. What many people don't know is that MoDOT receives only a portion of these funds.

As directed by the General Assembly, a large chunk of this revenue takes an exit to cities, counties and

other state agencies. Refunds from the Kansas assessment and chip sales at the turn. By the time MoDOT receives its share, nearly 40 percent of the funds are gone.

In Fiscal Year 2002, revenues going to other state agencies totaled more than \$140 million. City governments received nearly \$145 million, and counties shared in another \$108 million.

The bottom line: MoDOT received around \$307.4 million in taxes and fees to meet all its highway responsibilities. If we halted all new construction immediately, current funding would enable MoDOT to accomplish little more than maintaining what we have.



MoDOT fact

Twenty-five years ago, Missouri spent 17% of its budget on transportation. Excluding recent bond financing, state-perturbation fees accounts for only 7.5% of the state's budget.

More than \$434 million takes an exit

MoDOT's share is
63% of total funds.

Motor Fuel Tax
\$669.7 million

Motor Vehicle
Licenses/Fees
\$284.3 million

Merging Funds \$1.18 billion

Motor Vehicle
Sales/Use Taxes
\$227.5 million

Counties
\$108.1 million

State Agencies
\$141.4 million

Cities
\$144.8 million

Where Your Money Goes

MoDOT makes every effort to be a wise steward of taxpayer money. This graph shows the department's expenditures after funds for cities, counties and other agencies are taken out.

figures in thousands

Administration

MoDOT spends \$47 million, or less than 3 percent of its disbursements, on administrative functions. According to the Federal Highway Administration, that makes MoDOT the fifth lowest of the 50 states in administrative costs.

\$47,236
2.7%

Construction

Boosted by a temporary influx of bond finance money that must be repaid with interest, MoDOT spent about \$1.3 billion on construction, including new bridges, roads, lanes and highways in FY2002. That makes 2002 the largest construction year ever for Missouri.

\$1,328,992
75.3%

Maintenance

MoDOT's second largest expense is maintenance. That includes road resurfacing, shoulder repair, right-of-way upkeep and pothole repair.

\$263,990
15.0%

Service Operations

It takes more than bulldozers to build highways. Support personnel include legal, cultural resources, vehicle fleet management, governmental relations, computer technicians and more. They all play a vital role in MoDOT's operation.

\$99,225
5.6%

Debt Service

MoDOT must channel a portion of its funding to paying off financing debt.

\$25,098
1.4%

PHOTO BY JEFF

Inside:
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